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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Letter dated 19 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith*, the comment of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in regard to the report of Mrs. M. Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the situation of human rights in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I would like to ask you to have it circulated as an official document of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9.

(signed) Branko BRANKOVIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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COMMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA
in regard to the Report of Mrs. M. Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights "Situation of Human Rights in Kosovo, FR of Yugoslavia"

The Report on the "Situation of Human Rights in Kosovo, FR of Yugoslavia", presented by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. M. Robinson on 16 April 1999 at the Commission on Human Rights, was drawn solely on the basis of reports from newspapers and TV media from those countries that are taking part in the brutal aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including NATO, Pentagon and Great Britain Foreign Office briefings. It is known that the function of these media and purpose of these briefings are to justify the savage and inhuman aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia and the bombing of its territory and to support further escalation of the aggression.

The report based on such information puts the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Mrs. Robinson herself, in function of justifying the barbaric aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia which represents a crime against humanity and genocide against the Yugoslav peoples.

The so-composed report with its philosophy is clearly in function of the policy of strategic interests of countries - aggressors on the FR of Yugoslavia and thus, contrary to the mandate of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In order to make an impartial and credible Report, the High Commissioner for Human Rights should have based that report on irrefutable facts which are as follows:

- The brutal aggression by NATO against the sovereign and independent FR of Yugoslavia was launched on 24 March 1999.

- The bombing represents the flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE Final Act, international law, humanitarian law in particular.

- The bombing represents the genocide against the peoples of the FR of Yugoslavia.

- NATO bombing caused a humanitarian catastrophe with unforeseeable consequences for the civilian population of the FR of Yugoslavia.

- The exodus of refugees started as of 24 March 1999, i.e. on the day the bombing began. Hundreds of thousands of people had to leave their homes and flee to other parts of the FR of Yugoslavia and neighboring countries.

- The NATO barbaric bombing does not spare refugees. It kills them indiscriminately in collective centers or in convoys while going back to their homes.

- Over the past 26 days of the aggression, in 6000 criminal attacks by the NATO alliance, 500 civilians were killed, whereas 4000 were inflicted heavy injuries.

- The NATO criminals attack only civilian facilities, transport and economic infrastructure, dwellings, schools, children institutions, hospitals, refugee centers.

- By destroying economic facilities throughout the FR of Yugoslavia, 500 000 persons remained jobless, whereas 2 million of their family members were left without any further income.

- The 1998/1999 schoolyear was abruptly discontinued for 800 000 pupils and students and without any view that it will soon resume. That way, the right of pupils and students to education was most directly affected. Over 190 facilities in which education was conducted was partially or completely destroyed (kindergartens, schools and faculties).

All these facts clearly show that by bombing the FR of Yugoslavia, NATO countries committed a crime against humanity. The international community and the UN Commission on Human Rights must take all the necessary measures in order to stop this brutal aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia.

All persons responsible for this NATO aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia should be brought, without delay, before the international criminal court, one similar to the one in Nurnmberg where they would be held responsible for their crimes.

It was the duty and moral obligation of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to call on the Commission on Human Rights, in line with her mandate, to take all the necessary in order for the barbaric bombing of an independent and sovereign state be immediately halted. Unfortunacely, this was not the case, what is very much deplorable.

It is a sincere hope that the Commission on Human Rights itself would condemn the barbaric NATO aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia, what unfortunately was not done by the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

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